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MFL and Aquaculture Bills Pass Senate Committee

Madison, Wis. – Today, the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining, and Forestry approved Senate Bill 434 and Senate Bill 493 related to changes to the Managed Forest Law program and aquaculture respectively. Senator Tom Tiffany, the author of both provisions, issued the following statement:

“It is important that Wisconsin continues to responsibly utilize our natural resources. Wisconsin’s forest products industry contributes significantly to our economy, and it is vital that there be an adequate supply of wood to our mills. Senate Bill 434 incorporates many of the recommendations from the Governor’s Council on Forestry and makes the MFL program more attractive to woodland owners. The bill would also return millions of dollars in closed acreage fees back to local municipalities – where it rightfully belongs.”

“Excessive regulation can be detrimental to any industry. Unfortunately, we have seen this first-hand in the aquaculture industry in Wisconsin. While other states have seen growth in this sector, Wisconsin’s fish farming industry has been contracting. Fish farmers have been routinely caught up in bureaucratic red tape – sometimes waiting years to receive approval of a permit – making it hard to stay in business. Senate Bill 493 helps provide more certainty and clarifies that aquaculture, a vital component of Wisconsin’s economy and fishing heritage, be regulated more like agriculture. To protect Wisconsin’s water sources, federal standards and best management practices will be enforced. These clarifications work to help aquaculture in Wisconsin stay on a level playing field.”

“I want to thank committee members for supporting these bills.”

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